

ALAN S. DAVIS

THE WATUMULL FOUNDATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Alan S. Davis

(1892 - 1975)

Mr. Davis, a retired corporate executive and Campbell Estate trustee, was born in a house on Wilder Avenue opposite Punahou School. His father, an accountant, had come to Hawaii in the early 1880's to work for Grinbaum and Company and later established the Henry Davis Audit Company. At one time Henry Davis and John Wilder owned a grocery store on Fort Street.

After graduating from McKinley High School in 1910, Alan Davis went to work at the Consolidated Pineapple Company. The following year he was hired by the Hawaiian Trust Company as an office boy and when he left the firm in 1936 he was the executive vice-president. He has held executive positions at Castle & Cooke, C. Brewer and Company, Hawaiian Tuna Packers, and the Consolidated Amusement Company. He has been a trustee of the James Campbell Estate for many years.

Mr. Davis married Helen Kapililani Sanborn of Kauai in 1930 and they had three daughters.

In this interview, Mr. Davis discusses his family's history, his own employment history and experiences, and recalls some aspects of old Hawaii and some of his longtime friends.

Lynda Mair, Interviewer

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2051 Young Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96826

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## INTERVIEW WITH ALAN S. DAVIS

At his Campbell Estate office, 828 Fort Street, Honolulu, 96813  
October 7, 1971

D: Alan S. Davis

M: Lynda Mair, Interviewer

M: Okay, we can just go ahead and talk.

D: What's your question?

M: Well, to begin with I'd like to know something about your parents. For instance, I'm not aware of whether your father immigrated here or whether he was born here also.

D: Father and Mother came to Hawaii in the early 1880's. Father was born in Manchester, England. His family went to Jamaica when he was a very young man. He finally traveled through South America as a young man, up to San Francisco and then to Hawaii.

M: He was on his own.

D: He was on his own.

M: What kind of work did he do?

D: He was an accountant and he came here for a firm by the name of Grinbaum and Company who had their head office in San Francisco. Grinbaum and Company were the agents for the owners of what was then the Hana Sugar Plantation on Maui. Father did not go over to Maui but he settled here in Honolulu.

In the early part of his residence, he entered the grocery business with a partner by the name of John Wilder.

M: Hm. Do you know how he got into that business, from accounting?

D: I don't know. Before my time. He had a grocery store at one time, I believe, on the corner of Fort and Merchant; another time up on Fort Street a little further. After

leaving the grocery business, he took up public accounting and I believe he had the Certificate Number One of the Certified Public Accountants for the Territory of Hawaii when that law was enacted covering Certified Public Accountants.

M: About when would that have been, do you know?

D: I've forgotten the year. The record would be in the government files, I guess.

Mother came from Ireland. She was born near the Lakes of Killarney, stayed in Montreal for a short time; from Montreal she went to San Francisco and then out to Hawaii here. They were married in--this is from memory and my memory's not getting any better--I think around 1884.

M: So if your father came here about 1880, you say . . .

D: Yes, in the early 1880's.

M: He hadn't been here very long, then.

D: No, neither of them had been here very long.

M: What brought her here?

D: Mother came out as a companion for an old-time family by the name of Bush, as I recall it, and again I'm speaking from memory. I was the fourth child of a family of six. My eldest brother, Foster, was born in 1886. There was next my brother Elmer, my sister Emily, then myself, then my sister Florence and then the youngest of the family, my brother Henry. Three of us survive out of the six children.

M: Survived childhood?

D: I beg your pardon?

M: You mean, survived infancy?

D: No, three of us survive today.

M: Oh, I see.

D: My brother Foster lived to the age of seventy-seven; my brother Elmer to the age of eighty. My sister Emily passed away as a very young girl. She had diabetes at a time before they had insulin.

We were all, except my brother Foster, the five of us

were born at Punahou where the Catholic Church now is across from . . . [Punahou School]

M: The Sacred Hearts.

D: Sacred Hearts [Church, 1701 Wilder Avenue]. That was our old home site.

M: You mean it was just a private home that you lived in.

D: It was our private home, yes. Five of the six children were born there. We moved from Punahou to the corner of Piikoi and Young Street about 1909 or '10, as I remember it. Some of our neighbors there were John Walker, the contractor, and John Walker, an employee of W. G. Irwin and Company, whose youngest brother was Henry Walker-- Henry A. Walker, the father of the present manager of American Factors. There was also a neighbor across the street, John Parker, the father of Esmond Parker who for many years was the president of Consolidated Amusement Company. John Parker, the father of Esmond, was one of the founders of the Hawaiian Dredging Company. He at one time owned a third interest in it with Mr. Walter Dillingham and Mr. Bob [Robert] Atkinson.

I have lived here all my life practically. I'm going on to my seventy-ninth year now. I have held several important positions in the business community. I was executive vice-president of Hawaiian Trust Company for a number of years. I worked for Hawaiian Trust Company for twenty-five years. I left the trust company to accept a vice-presidency of Castle & Cooke. I later was executive vice-president of Castle & Cooke. I left Castle & Cooke to take over the management and operation of Hawaiian Tuna Packers, having acquired the controlling interest largely through a testamentary gift from a very intimate friend of mine, Christian R. Holmes.

When Castle & Cooke purchased my interest in Hawaiian Tuna Packers, I was offered the presidency of C. Brewer and Company which I accepted on the condition that I could retire not later than attaining the age of sixty-five but sooner if I felt conditions warranted; also that Brewer would accept the condition that I felt my first responsibility would be that as trustee of the Campbell Estate, I having just previously--a short time previously--been appointed a trustee of the James Campbell Estate.

I resigned from Brewer after about five and a half or six years of service, Brewer having gone back on a dividend basis, and I felt that the Campbell Estate obligation required more attention--a greater attention. Or, putting it another way, that it was too much of a burden to carry both responsibilities, the presidency of Brewer and the

Campbell Estate. I also, at about the same time when I resigned from Brewer, I was offered the presidency of the Hawaiian Trust Company which I declined for the same reason--that I felt the Campbell Estate responsibility in itself was sufficient to commit myself to. I further resigned from the Consolidated Amusement Company, a company that I'd been identified with for some forty years or more, and I was then chairman of the board and chairman of the executive committee. That's about it I guess. I don't know.

M: Can I go back and ask you some questions?

D: Um hm.

M: One thing I didn't get was your mother's maiden name.

D: Mary Magdalen. No, wait a minute! Nora Magdalen. (laugh-ter) N-O-R-A. Oh, how terrible.

M: Norma?

D: Nora. N-O-R-A. Nora Magdalen.

M: Oh, okay. That was her last name, Magdalen.

D: Spring.

M: Oh, Spring. Nora Magdalen Spring. Okay. Do you know any more of the circumstances about how your parents met or any of that?

D: No. In those days I guess there were rather few young Caucasians, I might say. There were the missionary people but neither Father nor Mother were missionaries. They were not of that group that came out but they did have a number of friends amongst them. But in those days the native population, of course, was the predominant. There were very few Asiatics here in those days and I guess it was just a case of two young people meeting each other and wanting to get married.

M: Were your parents Catholic?

D: My mother was a Catholic; my father was an Episcopalian.

M: Were the children raised in the Catholic Church?

D: I have a sister today who is a very devout Catholic. We were all christened in the Catholic Church but the menfolk didn't follow through. I was baptized a Catholic but I have not kept up. My sister Florence is a very devout

Catholic. She has been for many, many years.

M: The house on Piikoi, was that a large house?

D: It was quite a large house. The one at Punahou where we were all born was a two-story house and quite a large house as they went in those days. The one on Piikoi Street was owned by Queen Liliuokalani. It belonged to her and we rented it from her.

M: Did she own the property around there?

D: She owned the property. I think the Liliuokalani Trust still owns it, right on the corner of Piikoi and Young. I think they have some apartments or something in there now.

M: Did your father still continue as an accountant? Was he an accountant when you moved to the Piikoi house?

D: Yes.

M: He'd gotten out of the grocery business at that point.

D: Yes, he had. He had.

M: Was he an accountant on his own or did he belong to a firm?

D: Yes, he had his accounting firm and he was in it for many years. Later he more or less retired and my older brother Foster carried on for him. At times there were--I've forgotten--six, eight, ten accountants in the firm.

M: Where was his office?

D: Henry Davis Audit Company was the name of it.

M: Oh yeh! All of the financial statements for the Walker Company are audited by Henry Davis Auditing.

D: Yes, that was Father. Father's company, yes. I think I have some old pictures of the old grocery store in town right here with the name Davis and Wilder. The name Wilder is a very prominent name in the early days. S. G. Wilder had a steamship company; he had a lumberyard; he started the first railway on Maui and on Hawaii. They were very close friends of the family--the Wilder family. They were related to the Judd family and the Judds were very prominent people in the days of the monarchy.

Some people probably wouldn't believe me but I have two memories that just stand out in a way that I can never forget them. One was the taking down of the Hawaiian flag

in 1898 at the Capitol grounds [Iolani Palace]. I was there with my father and my brothers also and I remember the Hawaiian women in tears, crying when the Hawaiian flag came down. And also I remember a great many people in uniform. It was the time of the Spanish-American War and they were either going or coming--I don't know what it was --but there were quite a few people in uniform on the grounds at that time. That was 1898. And the other one that I remember very plainly is Princess Kaiulani's funeral. We watched it from the balcony of the old Union Grill up here on King Street, as the hearse went by.

M: Was it a big procession?

D: Oh yes, that was one of the real royal processions. Princess Kaiulani. Prince David, of course, had royal blood but that came from another line, the Kauai family, but Kaiulani was from the Likelike and back toward the Kamehamehas. The old days are gone. Hawaii in the early days was a real paradise. It really was. How long have you been here?

M: Ten years.

D: Ten years?

M: Um hm.

D: In the early days when we were at Punahou there was a beautiful star apple tree. It was like an umbrella. Any time on any kind of holiday or celebration of any kind, the Hawaiians would come in of their own accord and serenade us. We as youngsters used to enjoy that so much. That was the real old Hawaiian music and they'd stay until the wee hours of the morning until we kids were all sent to bed and everything and our parents finally got tired of sitting out there and come in and they'd still be there with little refreshments of something. But those were great old days, to sing like that. They'd never think of accepting any money or anything. They did it all for the pleasure themselves. They liked to serenade. I'm talking too much, I guess.

M: No, that's just what I'm looking for.

D: Yeh?

M: Let me check. (recorder is turned off and on again) Did you go to Punahou School?

D: No, I went to--it was then the Honolulu High School and it



was then Princess Ruth's former palace up by the corner of Vineyard and Emma [streets]. It's been torn down for many years but it was on the same style of architecture as the [Iolani] Palace building--that sort of building. It was changed in name and moved to the corner of Beretania and . . . . What's the street over from Ward toward Waikiki side?

M: Victoria?

D: Victoria. It was changed to the name McKinley in 1909 and moved to the corner of Beretania and Victoria and Young [streets]. It's now, I think, the Lincoln School or something.

M: Yeh, Linekona.

D: I graduated from McKinley in 1910 in that building there.

M: So you'd gone through the grades in high school in it.

D: Yes. The little grammar school I first went to, the first four grades, was called Ka'akopua School on Vineyard Street which adjoined the home of the Kings, where Governor Samuel Wilder King was born. Their home was right around there by the Ka'akopua School on Vineyard Street.

M: Vineyard and what?

D: It was on Vineyard. It was in the middle of the block. And across the school was Central Grammar and then it went into the Honolulu High School. They were both in the same grounds although in different buildings there. It was a public school and, as I say, it was changed to the name McKinley in 1909. I graduated from the second class after it became McKinley High School in 1910. I never did go to college.

M: Did all of your brothers and sisters go to the same schools?

D: No, my sister Emily graduated from Punahou. My sister Florence graduated from Punahou. The two girls went to Punahou; the boys went to public school.

M: How did you get from your house on Piikoi or by Punahou up to school.

D: Well, it wasn't very far when it was Lincoln, of course, because that was just a couple of blocks. We could walk down. In the early days from Punahou, which was much fur-

ther of course, my mother used to drive us to school in a little surrey with the tassels hanging down.

M: Oh really? (chuckles)

D: Yes, we had one of those and double-seated, you know. Father had a little sulky--whatever they called it--a little two-passenger deal that he went to work in and Mother would take the kids to school in the other one.

M: So you had a stable and horses right there at your house.

D: Yes, we had, yes. As kids we did. The areas then were big. Right next to us was a vacant lot, went from our place right down to Punahou Street. It must have been about--oh, I don't know--ten or fifteen acres that belonged to Mr. Claus Spreckels and he used to let us keep our ponies and our horses in there.

M: Did you children have your own horses to ride?

D: Well, there were two or three ponies that we took turns in riding. I didn't own one. Elmer and Foster were the ones that owned the ponies (laughter) but as they got older and they got tired of the ponies the younger ones were given a chance.

M: Did your parents allow you to just ride around the neighborhood and around town?

D: Oh yeh, but we had our duties too. We used to have some cattle there and we'd have to go out and cut grass for the cows too and help around the yard and everything. In those days, youngsters had to work, not like today. We had our regular chores at home.

M: Did you keep other animals besides your cows and horses?

D: Well, we always had dogs. Father always liked hunting. There's one of my dogs right there. Yes, we always had a lot of animals around--cats and dogs and birds and horses and cows. In those days most families had a pony or so, not cows necessarily, but the grounds were big. Our home at Punahou was about two or three acres I guess and then, as I say, the Claus Spreckels vacant lot alongside. He used to let us pasture animals in there.

M: Did most everybody have a buggy and horse then?

D: In those days, yes. There were only half a dozen automobiles. I remember the Wilder family was one of the first

ones that had one of these putt-putt Oldsmobiles and they used to come out on a Sunday or something to call in this little old chuck-chuck thing and you'd sit in the front seat and go up and down like this (laughter).

M: Did they take the kids for a ride or something?

D: Oh yes, and we always tried to get in on everything.

M: Was your father prosperous, would you say, compared to other Caucasian families?

D: No, Father always struggled. He had a big family and in those days it was quite expensive to get an education away from Hawaii, that's why none of us ever had a college education. All went through high school but it was only those of more wealth than my father had that could afford to send their boys away to college. Very few girls went away to college in those days.

M: Yeh, that's what I've gathered. The ones that did go on went to normal school and that's about as far as they went.

D: Um hm, um hm, that's true.

M: A lot of them became teachers.

D: Yes. No, no, Father was not a wealthy man at all. He struggled all the time because he had a big family and it cost a lot to have young people growing up on an accountant's salary.

M: How did you get into business yourself? Did you go right from high school into. . . ?

D: Well, yes. In 1910 I graduated from McKinley and we had a little country home out at Wahiawa. My mother had been out there because my sister Emily had been ill and that's where she passed away at Wahiawa and I went out right after school to be with Mother and got a job with the Consolidated Pineapple Company. It was then owned by Mr. Harold Castle's father. In later years Mr. Harold Castle and I became very close friends. But during the canning season, the canner that they had brought down from California from the California Fruit Packers Association got up and left and went back to California and I was the only other Caucasian, I guess, in the canning operation and they put me in charge of the cannery. I was only a very young person at the time. I was only seventeen, going on to eighteen.

M: Wow.

D: Well, I evidently got some ideas that I was quite important before the season was over because I was in charge and I was getting a very nominal compensation. I think it was fifty or sixty dollars a month or something like that and I thought I was entitled to more money so I struck for more money (Lynda chuckles) and the man who was representing Mr. Castle's father at the time--his name was Mr. J. J. Downing--he granted the increase I asked for, which I think was \$75--I wanted \$75 a month--and when the season was over he told me that my services were no longer needed. (laughter) So one of my father's very great friends was a man by the name of Sam Wilder and he was very close to the people who owned and ran the Hawaiian Trust Company--George Carter and that family and as a matter of fact he was a cousin of their's--so Mr. Sam Wilder arranged for me to go in and see a Mr. John R. Galt, who was George Carter's brother-in-law and who was then managing the Hawaiian Trust Company. They hired me and I went to work at Hawaiian Trust on March 11th--I mean March 1911; I've forgotten the day--and I was with them for twenty-five years.

M: What did you begin as?

D: Thirty-five dollars a month. It was a terrible comedown from seventy-five. (laughter) It was a terrible jolt and I really had to swallow hard to say yes to that job.

M: What were you doing at first?

D: I was office boy at first and then they raised me to fifty dollars a month after the first month and then I finally got into the trust administration work and, as I say, I was executive vice-president for quite a number of years before I left a very fine institution.

M: My husband works for Hawaiian Trust.

D: Oh really?

M: He's a trust administrator too.

D: Is that so? Well, I often wondered whether I'd done the right thing or not. Actually I was offered the presidency of Hawaiian Trust if I would not leave in 1936 and I gave it a great deal of thought but I finally went to Castle & Cooke. And as I say, I was again offered the presidency when I left Brewer in 1956, I guess it was. It's a very fine institution and it has a very wonderful reputation.

M: How did you come to leave Castle & Cooke and go to Brewer? Or, let's see, no, it was . . .

D: No, it wasn't Brewer. I went to Tuna Packers.

M: Yeh, that was it.

D: I had been working with a man by the name of Christian R. Holmes. I don't know whether you've heard of him.

M: Yeh, my husband's talked about him.

D: Well, he was one of the Fleischmann family. He was a very close friend of mine. He left me his shares in the Hawaiian Tuna Packers. I had been working with him for a number of years. I had a certain amount of stock but he owned the control and he left this to me and between what I had and what he gave me I think I had something in the neighborhood of ninety percent of the stock.

M: When you say left, you mean in his will?

D: Yes, in his will. He was a very wealthy man and this, while to me it was a very, very great gift and a very wonderful thing for him to do, he had a very big estate and his family, of course, were very well cared for besides this particular thing.

But I left Castle & Cooke I think it was in 1945, '46, something like that, because of the responsibility of this operation. It was quite a big operation and involved the borrowing of very substantial sums during packing season to finance the packs and all and I felt it was too much of a liability and responsibility to be having something like that and working for somebody else so I went down there. Then later, Castle & Cooke bought me out and that's when the Campbell family asked me if I would become a trustee of the Campbell Estate, which was in September of 1951. And just about the same time they wanted to make a change in the management of Brewer and I was asked if I would take over the presidency of Brewer, which I did on January 1, 1952. Well, that's about the story.

M: You've had a lot of varied business experiences. I mean different kinds of things. I guess that you transfer your skills and so forth fairly readily when you're at the top level.

D: Well, sometimes I wonder if it's smart or not to go changing so much but it is an experience and a varied experience and it gives you an opportunity to make all kinds of contacts that you wouldn't be able to make if you stayed in a particular job. My varied occupations have, of course, resulted in my making many trips all over. When I was in the fishing business I went down all through the South Pa-

cific, through the mandate areas, and out to Japan and Australia and whatnot. And then of course in Brewer the sugar business took me to the mainland a great deal. I'm afraid again I've talked too much.

M: No, no. No, don't feel that way. I have to make sure this machine is working.

END OF SIDE 1/1ST TAPE

D: I surely hope you won't feel that I'm trying to publicize myself.

M: Oh no, not at all.

D: 'Cause I never have done that sort of thing.

M: No, you're probably too modest really.

D: No, no. (chuckles) No, but I've always tried to keep out of publicity if I could.

M: Uh huh.

D: You say your husband is with Hawaiian Trust.

M: Yeh, um hm.

D: Mr. Mair, he's in the investment department, isn't he?

M: No, Jim Myers is in the investment. My husband is Donald Mair.

D: Oh, Myers, that's right, yeh. What's his activity there now? He's in trust administration?

M: Yeh, he's an assistant vice-president. He worked very closely with Freddie.

D: Oh, Fred [Fedrico O.] Biven.

M: Yeh.

D: Oh oh. Tell me, how is Freddie? Has he been in the hospital, did someone tell me?

M: Yeh, he was in the hospital for about two weeks and he wasn't really that sick. They got him all fixed up and he came out of the hospital feeling great and I just talked to him yesterday and he sounds fine.

D: Was he at home there?

M: Uh huh.

D: I must make a date for lunch with him or something. He's one of the most loyal friends I've had. He's a real fine fellow. He's his own worst enemy because he does too much for everybody else.

M: Yeh, right. I wanted you to talk something about--you said you involved in Consolidated Amusement?

D: Yes, I was with Consolidated I guess thirty-five years or more. Let's see, 1919 I think I first became connected with Consolidated and I think I finally retired about 1957. Yeh, about thirty-five to forty years. Between thirty-five and forty years. I was president of it at one time. I was chairman of the board for many, many years. I never worked in it. It was always a side job with my principal occupation but I was very active in it in the responsibilities I had to take over the years. It was only a small company when I first was with it. It only had two or three theaters and we acquired theaters all over the place and finally became quite a big company.

M: Um hm. How did you come to first get into it?

D: Well, I got into it in this way. The Hawaiian Trust Company in 1919 underwrote a bond issue to build the Hawaii Theater on Bethel Street and the then president, Joel C. Cohen, a very great old friend of mine, incurred obligations outside of the building contract and the company became financially embarrassed and had to find ways and means of raising some money that had to be paid if it was to continue to operate. So I arranged to put out a preferred stock issue to pick up this additional money needed and part of the conditions at that time were the preferred stockholders would put up the money and insisted that I get on the board of directors at that time to protect their interest, which I did, and it developed very fortunately thereafter. It met with great success and I just stayed with it thirty-five years or so. It became a very profitable company.

M: You were quite young.

D: 1919, when I was twenty-six years of age. One of my real responsibilities that I look back toward and am very happy that I had the opportunity: from 1919 to '36 most all the corporate financing here was done through syndicates and mostly on the basis of bond issues and Hawaiian Trust was

nearly always the manager of the syndicate. Great competition between Bishop Trust and Hawaiian Trust. My very close friend Cyril Damon was with Bishop and I was with Hawaiian but we had the great majority of the cases that we were the managers of the syndicate, Hawaiian Trust, and that was one of my jobs with Hawaiian Trust; American Factors' financing, T. H. Davies, Hawaiian Electric, Mutual Telephone, loads of these sugar companies and all needing financing got it in this way and Hawaiian Trust was nearly always the manager of the syndicate. Of course they were very fine days for the Hawaiian Trust Company and they were really . . .

M: Yeh, I'll bet.

D: Yes. It's changed quite a bit. Actually the Hawaiian Trust Company in those days was considered even more important than the Bank of Hawaii. Mr. Hoby Walker, who was my boss in Hawaiian Trust Company, declined the presidency of the Bank of Hawaii to stay with the Hawaiian Trust Company. He considered it a greater opportunity to be with Hawaiian Trust than to be with the Bank of Hawaii. Things have reversed since then, of course. (laughter)

M: They have indeed. I wanted to ask, when did your parents pass away?

D: My mother died from an appendicitis operation in 1918. February 1918. She was I think about fifty-seven or so. I've forgotten. Fifty-seven years of age I think. Father lived until ninety-two years of age and Father passed away about 1945 I think it was. Somewheres along there. He was ninety-two and he was alert mentally, very alert, right up to within two or three months of his death. He read everything, could discuss any kind of a problem, and he went down to his office daily up to a very short time before his death. He was one of the old-timers here. Whenever he wanted to cross the street at King and Bishop or anywhere he'd walk out and hold his cane up like this and everybody stopped for him. (laughter) Yes, they were very good to him because Father was quite along in years when he was walking the streets alone. And that's about it.

M: Oh, one more thing I wanted to ask you about. I assume you're married.

D: Yes.

M: And could you tell me something . . .



D: Three daughters.

M: That's what I gathered (chuckles). Could you tell me something about how you met your wife?

D: Yes. Helen's a local girl. She was born on Kauai. [Helen Kapililani Sanborn] She was the president of the Garden Club. She's now the zone chairman. She left yesterday to attend a zone meeting up in Portland where she has all the West Coast Garden Clubs under her zone, including Hawaii. She's also been the president of the Outdoor Circle now. She's done a great deal in community work of that nature.

Helen and I met. . . . I was a bachelor for a long time. I was thirty-seven, I guess, going on to thirty-eight when I was married.

M: My! People must have given up on you by then. (laughter)

D: Well, Helen's quite a bit younger. Helen's about fourteen years younger than I am. She's a Kauai girl, from Hanalei, and we met. Oh, I used to have a little cattle ranch out on Koko Head and Helen used to come out with one of the younger groups that used to come out riding all the time. She's a better horsewoman than I am a--what should I say?--a horseman? No. (laughter) But she can ride better than I can. She knows horses better than I do and yet I had a ranch for thirty years or more. But we met in that way, mostly through both liking ranch life and all and we've been married ever since 1930. We're getting pretty close to our golden wedding as of 1980. (laughter)

M: Yeh.

D: Yes, we're in our fortieth now.

M: And you have three daughters.

D: We lost our eldest daughter, the little girl in the middle. Helen Emily passed away at the age of nine and a half very suddenly. Out of a clear sky she was stricken with a brain tumor and in the matter of a few hours she was gone. Never had had any illness of any kind.

But our other two daughters, Nancy is the one on the right. She has four children. She's Mrs. James Pflueger. Have you heard of Jimmy Pflueger?

M: Um hm.

D: Well, Nancy is Mrs. James Pflueger. She has four very lovely children.

M: Is she the oldest?

D: She's the oldest surviving. Helen Emily was the eldest daughter, the one we lost. And Linda. That's her baby picture. She'd probably step all over me if she knew I had it there. (laughter) Linda is married, living in Woodside, California. She's married to a young fellow who's in his third year in medical school now.

M: What's her married name?

D: [Mrs. William B.] Hurlbut. H-U-R-L-B-U-T. And they both graduated together from Stanford [University] four years ago, I guess it was, because he's in his third year now of medical school and now, as I say, very happily married in Woodside. This medical course is really something. He's got another year at college. I think he's got another year as intern. I think he's got about three more years before he'll be practicing. It's a long pull. Four years of college and then six years more. About ten years that is. Really long pull.

M: What was your wife's maiden name?

D: Helen Sanborn. Her family was an old-time family on Kauai, well-known there in the Hanalei area. They still have the old home down there.

M: How did you get into this ranching thing?

D: Well, again, some of my very old friends and one of my very intimate friends was the Damons and they had a ranch out at Koko Head. As a matter of fact, with part of it down there at Moanalua was in those days just out of this world, nothing but a ranch. Today it's all subdivided and gone. But Doug [Douglas Wilfred Damon] and I were very close friends and the father had what is now Hawaii-kai, six thousand acres out there belonged to the Bishop Estate and Doug's father had had it for forty years. The lease had expired and when it came up to be rented again, Doug, who was managing the ranch, didn't want to pay the rent the Bishop Estate offered for it. Francis Brown, a friend of mine, and I decided when the Damons gave it up that we'd like to take about half of it and we did. We took three thousand acres and so we had that ranch for thirty years. I got it in 1920. We paid a dollar an acre for what they're renting out at Hawaii-kai there so many hundred dollars a year for a quarter of an acre or something. We paid a dollar an acre for all that stuff. We had all of Portlock and everything at one time.

- M: That was your lease rent--was a dollar an acre per year.
- D: Yes, we had three thousand acres for \$3,000 and we had it from 1922 to 1952.
- M: Did you raise beef cattle?
- D: We had about six hundred cattle on it, yes. It was a fun deal as much as anything else. We used to have these cattle drives and branding and all our friends from town would come out and we had a lot of fun.
- M: I'll bet, yeh.
- D: Yes, those days are all gone. (Lynda chuckles)
- M: Yeh. Well, it's changed so much in your lifetime.
- D: Yes, I do sort of wish there was a little more of old Hawaii left. It's just all gone and not here any more. Not a very good thing to say, being in this kind of a business and playing up to tourists and everything, telling them what a wonderful place Hawaii is. (laughter)
- M: Yeh.
- D: But it has changed. Waikiki--I used to, when I worked at the Hawaiian Trust Company, have a motorcycle and I parked it in back of Mr. Tenney's window here and I had to be very careful not to start it before Mr. Tenney left. (laughter) We'd go out to Waikiki surfing and, oh my, there were a couple of dozen people at the Royal Hawaiian along the beach there, Duke Kahanamoku and all that gang. Really not more than two or three dozen, the old Hui Nalu group and all, and today of course there's hundreds of them. I wouldn't for the life of me be willing to go out surfing in that kind of a crowd but in those early days it was just wonderful. It really was.
- M: Waikiki's such a good place to surf.
- D: Hmm?
- M: Waikiki has such good surfing.
- D: Oh, it was great in the old days, yes.
- M: But now it's too dangerous with so many people. Most of them don't know how. I had one more question I wanted to ask you. What was it? It's about one of your business things. Now what was it?

D: Have you seen Francis Brown? If you're talking with older residents here, he's a little older than I am.

M: I tried to talk to a Julia Brown. Is that a relation?

D: Well, that's his sister-in-law.

M: She didn't want to talk to me. Freddie called her first for me and told her all about it.

D: Francis can really tell you some of the old days of Hawaii.

M: Well, I'll call him.

D: He's not in the best of health but he'd like to talk about it if you gave him a chance and he's feeling all right. He has a home right out there by the golf course, right by Freddie--just a little beyond Freddie--and Freddie is a very good friend of his too.

M: Oh, well, okay.

D: Brownie, he's a great fellow. He's been the champion golfer in Hawaii for years and he won the California Open and the Japan Open and, oh, he's a great, great guy. He's well-known all over, Brownie is, and he was born in Hawaii and he's alii. His mother was . . .

M: Yeh, he's part-Hawaiian, isn't he?

D: Yes. (Counter at 205)

END OF INTERVIEW

Re-transcribed and edited by Katherine B. Allen

Edited by Helen S. Davis, 1980

## ADDENDUM

pp. 16-17 Francis Brown sold his interest in Wawamalu Ranch to J. Platt Cooke about 1928.

April 1, 1946 we [Mr. and Mrs. Alan S. Davis] lost our home and all dwellings at Wawamalu due to the tidal wave. We moved to 1001 A. Wilder Avenue where Alan's father had his home before his death.

In 1963 we moved the improved and enlarged home at Wilder Avenue on four trailers to Waipio Mauka where Francis Brown's mother and family had a mountain home above Mililani Town, about four miles through the pineapple fields. Here Alan developed a farm--a side venture--and the principal crop was lichee. The fruit was marketed in Vancouver, New Zealand and San Francisco.

He [Alan S. Davis] died at home July 25, 1975.

Helen S. Davis

August 11, 1980

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## THE WATUMULL FOUNDATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

In May 1971, the Watumull Foundation initiated an Oral History Project.

The project was formally begun on June 24, 1971 when Katherine B. Allen was selected to interview kamaainas and longtime residents of Hawaii in order to preserve their experiences and knowledge. In July, Lynda Mair joined the staff as an interviewer.

During the next seventeen months, eighty-eight persons were interviewed. Most of these taped oral histories were transcribed by November 30, 1972.

Then the project was suspended indefinitely due to the retirement of the foundation's chairman, Ellen Jensen Watumull.

In February 1979, the project was reactivated and Miss Allen was recalled as director and editor.

Three sets of the final transcripts, typed on acid-free Permalife Bond paper, have been deposited respectively in the Archives of Hawaii, the Hamilton Library at the University of Hawaii, and the Cooke Library at Punahou School.